

OUTGOING MESSAGE

Approved For Release 2005/04/21 : CIA-RDP78S01932A000100010032-2

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MESSAGE HANDLING INDICATOR

DATE-TIME GROUP

CITE

MESSAGE REFERENCE NUMBER

[Redacted]

CIAGET / WHIZ 740108

ITEM 003

SOURCE REF:

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ITEM NO: 3

DATE: 3 JAN 74

SUBJECT: CUBA

[Redacted]

CUBA'S AMBASSADOR TO MEXICO REPORTEDLY TOLD THE PRESS YESTERDAY, IN A CONFERENCE HE HAD CALLED HIMSELF, THAT HAVANA WOULD BE WILLING TO EXPLORE THE REESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH THE US AS SOON AS WASHINGTON LIFTS THE ECONOMIC BLOCKADE AGAINST CUBA. THE AMBASSADOR ADDED THAT THE US NAVAL BASE AT GUANTANAMO BAY IS NO LONGER AN OBSTACLE TO NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE US.

THE TONE OF THE AMBASSADOR'S REMARKS CONCERNING THE BLOCKADE AND GUANTANAMO--IF ACCURATELY REPORTED--IS SOFTER THAN USUAL. HE APPARENTLY SAID NOTHING ABOUT HAVANA'S OTHER REQUIREMENT OF

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STANDING FOR IMPROVEMENT IN US-CUBAN RELATIONS, NAMELY, THAT THE US CEASE ITS "INTERVENTION" OR "GENDARMIST ROLE" IN LATIN AMERICA. HAVANA MAY HAVE SEVERAL PURPOSES IN RAISING THE SUBJECT OF US-CUBAN RELATIONS PRIOR TO THE ARRIVAL OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE IN MEXICO FOR TALKS WITH HIS LATIN AMERICAN COLLEAGUES. HAVANA MAY BE TESTING THE WIND FOR POSSIBLE CHANGES IN US POLICY TOWARD CUBA. THE CUBANS ALSO MAY HOPE THAT THE REMARKS WILL HELP INCREASE REGIONAL PRESSURE TO END THE BLOCKADE DURING SECRETARY KISSINGER'S FORTHCOMING DISCUSSIONS WITH LATIN AMERICAN FOREIGN MINISTERS IN MEXICO. FINALLY, HAVANA MAY ANTICIPATE THAT THE STATEMENT WILL HELP RELIEVE POSSIBLE SOVIET PRESSURE ON THE CUBAN LEADERSHIP TO BECOME MORE FLEXIBLE IN ITS ATTITUDE TOWARD THE US.

REGARDLESS OF THE US RESPONSE, HAVANA FEELS IT HAS LITTLE TO LOSE. THE CUBANS WILL INTERPRET AN AFFIRMATIVE REPLY AS A "VICTORY" AND ARE CONFIDENT THAT A NEGATIVE REACTION WILL SHIFT GREATER BLAME ON THE US FOR THE CONTINUATION OF A HOSTILE RELATIONSHIP.

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